



## When you Arrive at Somerset

- Rucksacks are used for Duke of Ed & some School Programs. **Check your Equipment List for details.**
- Somerset Group Leaders will check your child/ward has all necessary equipment for the Program.
- Duke of Ed Program gear will also be checked by the Group Leader who will assist with waterproofing (where required) and supervise re-packing into Rucksacks.
- Excess items not required (extra clothes, the bag gear came to Camp in etc.) will be stored at Base Camp until the completion of the Program.
- If a Rucksack is being used – it will be adjusted to fit and weighed to make sure it is not too heavy.
- If you are struggling to get it right, your Group Leader will be able to assist you further upon arrival.



Re-pack with Group Leader at Base Camp

## A Few Simple Points to Keep in Mind

- Limit what you need – you can add any ‘luxury’ items (such as a book) later if space and weight permits.
- Layout everything before you start packing.
- Keep things in groups. For example, all clothing together; toiletries & first aid; utensils, cup & bowl; all food together so as everything is at hand when you need to perform a certain task.
- Separately waterproof your sleeping bag in waterproof stuff sack or garbage bag (any colour but black).
- Separately waterproof your clothes in waterproof stuff sacks, zip locks or in plastic bags (not black).

## Starting to Pack



- Loosen all straps on your pack to open up the inside space as much as possible.
- Place your sleeping bag at the bottom of your pack, squeeze any other lightweight items such as clothing into the gaps.
- Place the heavier items like your tent, food and water in the middle of your pack. This helps to reduce the downward & backward pull on your back, making it more comfortable to carry.
- Place medium weight items like clothing, foam mat or Thermarest (self-inflating mat) around the heavier items.
- Place any items that you may need quick access to such as snacks, maps, rain jacket or first aid items on top or in any side or top pockets.
- Do not hang any items on the outside of your Rucksack. The swinging motion interferes with your walking rhythm and makes it harder and more uncomfortable to carry. You also risk damaging or losing items which could litter the bush.

## Adjusting the Rucksack to Fit You

- Rucksacks have several straps to adjust to maximise greater comfort on your load.
- Your legs have some of the strongest muscles in your body and the goal is to adjust your straps so the majority of the load rests on your hips.
- There are 4 primary adjustment straps and they should be adjusted in the order they are listed below:
  1. **Hip-Belt** – sits on top of your hip bones.
  2. **Shoulder Straps** – adjustable near your lower ribs.
  3. **Load-lifter Straps** – adjustable at the top of the shoulders.
  4. **Sternum Strap** – sits across your chest, approximately 1 inch below your collar bone.
- Before adjusting your Rucksack, make sure it is packed completely (full water bottles included).
- To get it onto your back, first lift it onto your knee and slip your right arm through the strap.
- Without swinging, gently transfer the weight onto your back & swiftly loop your left arm through the other strap to finish.
- Do up the hip-belt buckle so the padding sits on top of your hip bones & adjust clothing underneath to avoid bunching.
- Adjust straps 1 and 2 and when they feel comfortable, continue to adjust straps 3 and 4.
- The final adjustments should feel snug, but not make you feel stiff and tense. You should also feel like your centre of gravity and weight-load is centred at your hips. This means you should feel balanced and not top-heavy.
- Please note: adjusting your Rucksack is a dynamic process, which means it will need to be done regularly to accommodate changes in weight and developments of any sore spots over the duration of the expedition.